

## **FBI Laboratory Practices for the Forensic Examiner Training Program**

### **1 Purpose**

These practices provide the structure, training requirements, and feedback mechanisms for Forensic Examiner Trainees (FETs) and the Forensic Examiner (FE) training program (FETP). Following these practices will result in a common understanding of training expectations and training progress. Feedback will be solicited from the FETs and personnel who facilitate, record, and/or review training (e.g., trainers, mentors) that can be used to strengthen the overall training program.

### **2 Scope**

These practices apply to FBI Laboratory FETs and personnel who facilitate, record, and/or review training.

### **3 Practices**

An FET is required to complete all training as detailed in their training plan.

#### **3.1 Initiation of the Forensic Examiner Training Program**

##### **3.1.1 Trainee Assessment and Development of Training Plan**

Prior to the initiation of the FE training program, the Technical Leader will conduct an assessment (e.g., review of previous experience, written/verbal evaluation) of an FET's level of knowledge and skills regarding the specific discipline and/or category(ies) of testing the FET will be trained in. The purpose of the assessment is to determine if the FE training program should be modified.

Based on the assessment conducted by the Technical Leader, the Training Program Manager (TPM) will ensure a training plan is developed and provided to an FET within 45 calendar days of initiating the training program. This plan will contain a list of training exercises and projected completion dates. The projected completion dates in the training plan are subject to change. These changes do not need to be recorded. All training plans must be approved by the Technical Leader and the trainee's Unit Chief.

##### **3.1.1.1 Training Program Modifications**

If it is determined that fewer than the unit, discipline and/or category(ies) of testing training program's required number of exercises are needed due to the trainee's prior experience, the

training plan will reflect the modification to the training program.

### **3.1.1.2 Laboratory Division Training Requirement Modifications**

Any requests for the training plan to deviate from completing the Laboratory Division requirements for the FETP Common Core Training (CCT) course, the public speaking exercises as described in these practices, and/or the Laboratory Operations Manual (LOM) - Practices for Oral Board Exercises and/or the LOM - Practices for Moot Court and Admissibility Exercises, requires approval from the Forensic Examiner Training Program Manager (FETPM) prior to implementing such changes. These changes and approval(s) will be recorded in the training plan.

**3.1.2** If an FET's progress within the training program indicates a need for a modification to their training plan, the TPM will prepare the modified training plan.

**3.1.3** A copy of the training plan(s) and any approved departures/modifications from the minimum requirements (i.e., unit, discipline and/or category(ies) of testing training program, Laboratory Division) will be maintained in the FET's training record.

**3.1.4** The TPM will ensure the FET reviews their training plan and applicable training manual for a general understanding of expectations, structure, and topics that will be covered throughout training. The TPM or appropriate training personnel will discuss the training plan and the applicable training manual with the FET. The review and discussion will be recorded within the FET's training record.

**3.2** The TPM will ensure that appropriate training resources are available to an FET.

**3.3** The Unit Chief(s) will ensure that personnel are available to provide guidance to an FET throughout their training program.

**3.4** The Technical Leader will ensure that an FET receives the training necessary to become qualified to perform their assigned work.

## **3.5 Training Requirements**

The following course and exercises must be successfully completed to be eligible to become a qualified and authorized forensic examiner in a discipline(s)/category(ies) of testing. These will be incorporated into the approved FE training plan, unless otherwise noted within the approved training plan and/or modified training plan, as appropriate:

- FETP Common Core Training (CCT) course
- Public Speaking Exercises
- Competency Test(s) as described in QAM - Section 6.2.3.1
- Supervised Casework and/or Simulated Casework Exercises
- Oral Board Exercises

- Moot Court/Admissibility Hearing Exercises

A training manual may require other exercises in addition to those listed above.

**3.5.1** An FET is required to enroll in the FETP CCT course via Virtual Academy. The FETP CCT is an online course administered by FBI Laboratory personnel. The FET must begin the course within the first six months of starting their FE position in the FBI Laboratory. Successful completion will be recorded in Virtual Academy and within the FET's training record.

**3.5.1.1** If an FET does not successfully complete the FETP CCT course, they will be given one additional opportunity to retake the course at its next offering. Two unsuccessful attempts at completing the FETP CCT course will result in the removal of the FET from the FETP.

**3.5.2** An FET is required to successfully complete a minimum of two public speaking exercises during their training. The requirements for the public speaking exercises will be listed in each appropriate training manual. The *Public Speaking Exercise Evaluation (7-271)* (Appendix A) will be used to record the evaluation of the presentations. *Public Speaking Exercise Evaluation* forms will be maintained in the FET's training record.

**3.5.3** An FET is required to complete supervised casework and/or simulated casework exercises. Each appropriate training manual will define the minimum number of supervised casework and/or simulated casework exercises to be completed. The TPM will ensure a written evaluation of the defined number of supervised casework and/or simulated casework exercises is provided to the FET. These records will be maintained in the FET's training record.

**3.5.4** An FET is required to successfully complete Oral Board exercises as required by their training plan and in accordance with the LOM - Practices for Oral Board Exercises.

**3.5.5** An FET is required to successfully complete Moot Court/Admissibility Hearing exercises as required by their training plan and in accordance with the LOM - Practices for Moot Court and Admissibility Hearing Exercises.

### **3.6 Evaluation of an FET's Training Progress**

The evaluation of an FET's training progress will be conducted through the following mechanisms:

- Monthly review of FET's training activity logs
- Quarterly evaluation of FET's training progress
- Quarterly assessment of the FET Program

**3.6.1** The FET will maintain a log of all training activities. The TPM or appropriate training personnel will review the FET's training log on a monthly basis and a record of the review will be maintained in the FET's training record.

**3.6.2** The TPM or designee will provide feedback to the FET, at a minimum on a quarterly basis, on the FET's training progress. The review of the FET's training activities, and discussion of their overall training progress and performance will be recorded in the FET's training record using the *Forensic Examiner Trainee Evaluation* (7-270) (Appendix B).

**3.6.2.1** The FET may request, in writing, interim feedback (i.e., more frequent than quarterly), from the TPM and/or appropriate training personnel. The additional feedback on the FET's training progress and additional review of their training activities, and discussion of overall training progress and performance will be recorded in the FET's training record using the *Forensic Examiner Trainee Evaluation*.

**3.6.3** Training program assessments will be provided electronically to an FET on a quarterly basis throughout the duration of their training. The FET's feedback will be used to assess the effectiveness of the FET training program. Changes to the FET training program will be implemented when appropriate. The FETPM will ensure the review of this quarterly assessment data for all disciplines/categories of testing and the generation of the appropriate quarterly reports for dissemination.

**3.6.4** Timely written feedback (e.g., memo, email, training record sign-offs) will be given to an FET upon completion of any analytical exercise and/or scored tests/quiz.

### **3.7 Concluding the FETP**

When an FET has successfully completed their training program to the satisfaction of the Technical Leader, an Electronic Communication (EC) (FD-1057) will be prepared and approved according to QAM - Section 6.2.6 to record the FET's qualification and authorization(s).

### **3.8 Remediation within the FETP**

A written remediation plan will be generated to address an FET's failure of the FETP CCT course or a public speaking exercise and retained in the FET's training record. Unsuccessful completion of an Oral Board or Moot Court/Admissibility Hearing exercise will be handled in accordance with the LOM - Practices for Oral Board Exercises or the LOM - Practices for Moot Court and Admissibility Hearing Exercises, as appropriate. A level 2 document(s) will define requirements to address the failure of any other exercise in the FET's training plan.

### **3.9 Removal from the FETP**

An FET will be removed from the FETP in accordance with this document, the LOM - Practices for Oral Board Exercises or the LOM - Practices for Moot Court and Admissibility Hearing Exercises, as appropriate, when the second attempt at the same exercise is unsuccessful. An FET may also be removed from the FETP when they are unsuccessful at completing other aspects of the training program. The Unit Chief will be responsible for overseeing the administrative process of removing an FET from the FETP.

### 3.10 FETP Evaluation and Recommendations

**3.10.1** The FETPM will provide written recommendations, as needed, based on data collected through quarterly training program assessments, to applicable Unit Chiefs, TPMs and Technical Leaders regarding the FETP. The FETPM will also ensure the FBI Laboratory-wide training trends are reviewed with TPMs and when appropriate, implement changes to the FETP.

**3.10.2** The effectiveness of the FETP will be evaluated through the use of electronic FETP assessments. These FETP assessments will be provided to newly qualified FEs at designated intervals after their completion of the FETP. The FETPM will ensure the FBI Laboratory-wide training trends are reviewed with the TPMs and when appropriate, implement changes to the FETP.

## 4 Training Records

The TPM will ensure that the following records are generated and retained permanently in the FET's training record, except as noted below, as a result of these practices:

- Training plan with projected dates for training exercises.
- Modified training plans, if generated.
- Log of training activities, reflecting the monthly TPM or appropriate training personnel review.
- *Forensic Examiner Trainee Evaluation* forms.
- Virtual Academy record reflecting FETP CCT course completion.
- Quarterly training program assessments reports will be retained by the Forensic Analysis Support Unit.
- Record of feedback provided for any analytical exercise and/or scored tests/quiz.
- Written evaluation of supervised casework and/or simulated casework exercises.
- Record of demonstration of competence.
- *Public Speaking Evaluation* forms.
- Copy of FE qualification and authorization EC.
- Remediation plans, if generated.

## 5 References

FBI Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

ISO/IEC 17025 - General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories, International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland, 2017.

ISO/IEC 17025:2017 - Forensic Science Testing and Calibration Laboratories Accreditation Requirements (AR 3125), ANAB, Milwaukee, WI, April 29, 2019.

ISO/IEC 17020 - Conformity Assessment - Requirements for the Operation of Various Types of Bodies Performing Inspection, International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland, 2012.

Rev. #	Issue Date	History
5	06/03/19	Added section titles and reworded for clarity throughout document. In section 3.1.1.1, clarified requirements for training plan modification if need fewer than unit, discipline and/or category(ies) of testing training program's number of exercises. Added FETP CCT course in sections 3.1.1.2, 3.5, 3.5.1, 3.5.1.1, 3.8, and 4. Updated list of references in section 5. Replaced images of forms in Appendices A and B to reflect electronically fillable forms.
6	12/21/20	Minor edits throughout for clarity. 3.1.1 - moved approvals for training plans from 3.1.1.1 5 – added ISO/IEC 17020 Updated Appendix B <i>Forensic Examiner Trainee Evaluation</i> (7-270)

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**Approval**

Laboratory Director

Date: 12/18/2020

Quality Manager

Date: 12/18/2020

**Appendix A: *FBI Laboratory Public Speaking Exercise Evaluation (7-271)***

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**Appendix B: *FBI Laboratory Forensic Examiner Trainee Evaluation (7-270)***

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